

Ohio House Ways and Means Committee
Proponent Testimony
House Bill 61
Jen Lynch, Owner, Rambling House

Thank you Chairman Schaffer, Vice Chair Scherer, and Ranking Member Rogers for hearing House Bill 61, which will exempt sales and use taxes from tampons and other feminine hygiene products. I apologize that I could not be here to testify in-person, however my schedule did not permit.

By way of background, my husband, John Lynch and I opened the Rambling House almost four years ago in Columbus, Ohio. Rambling House is a bar that prides itself on having quality music, selling Ohio-made beer, and the finest cocktails. We also manufacture small-batch, hand-crafted soda pop that we sell at our bar and many other bars and restaurants in Columbus, and we have a special partnership with Dennison University to provide soda pop in their dining hall. We recently launched a bottled cocktail, called the Rambling House Cocktails—and our first product is a traditional “Moscow Mule”—utilizing Watershed Vodka and Rambling House ginger soda. We are in almost 200 Kroger stores statewide, and many other retail locations around the state.

Our company is growing, and we are excited at the opportunity to be Ohio’s first bottled cocktail. We know that we cannot do this without taking care of our customers. We believe that every experience at our bar sends a message about our values and how we respect our customers. In fact, Yelp just rated the Rambling House “one of the top 50 music venues in America.”

After meeting with Claire Coder, founder of Aunt Flow, we were inspired to provide women’s feminine hygiene products at no cost to our customers. Aunt Flow makes it easy for businesses to stock their restrooms, and in return, gives back to those in need. It is our belief that these products should be no different than toilet paper or hand soap.

We are supplying our customers with medically necessary products that happen to be needed when least expected. It doesn’t matter how much a woman plans—the unfortunate situation of not being prepared when you are away from home—should be respected as a society and we should provide for those situations. Those that do should not have to pay taxes on these medically necessary products.

The bottom line is, no one wants to talk about this, but we need to. It is unfortunate that more businesses and public entities do not take this issue more serious. But, that said, we understand. Many small businesses like Rambling House are just trying to make payroll and manage the day-to-day activities of running a business.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to testify on behalf of House Bill 61 and we urge the passage of this important piece of legislation.